

Immediate Release

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## **NH/VT Christmas Tree Growers Spread Christmas Spirit to US Military**

Christmas trees from 30 farms across New Hampshire and Vermont are being collected at the Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests Rocks Christmas Tree Farm in Bethlehem, NH as part of a nationwide effort called “**Trees for Troops**.” This program provides Christmas trees to US military troops and their families. The local effort was officially kicked off on November 17 by NH Executive Councilor Ray Burton, who participated in a ceremonial tree cutting and at the Rocks farm.

Nigel Manley, manager of the Rocks Christmas Tree Farm is chairman of the national Christmas SPIRIT Foundation. He is coordinating the collection of the trees from the New Hampshire and Vermont region. “Trees are being donated by growers from both states and by regional businesses and schools,” he said, “Local elementary school students held a dance and initiated a “read-a-thon” to raise money for trees.”

On November 29<sup>th</sup> some 400 trees will be loaded into a FedEx trailer, with the help of local students, for shipment to Fort Drum, NY. From there the trees will be distributed to US military families across the country and around the world.

The Christmas SPIRIT Foundation and FedEx - in cooperation with the National Christmas Tree Association - have partnered on this effort to boost the Christmas spirit for U.S. military men and women. For the third year, Christmas tree growers and retailers are donating real Christmas Trees to be distributed at military bases in the U.S. and overseas. Across the US, more than 17,000 trees have been committed and will be sent to 25 military bases, in the US and overseas. The program reaches those serving in the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines, Coast Guard and National Guard.

For more information about “**Trees for Troops**”, visit [www.christmasspiritfoundation.org](http://www.christmasspiritfoundation.org). For more information about where to find Christmas Trees for your own holiday celebration, visit [www.nh-vtchristmastree.org](http://www.nh-vtchristmastree.org), or [www.nhchristmastree.com](http://www.nhchristmastree.com). Contact the NH Dept. of Agriculture, Markets & Food for more Christmas tree information at 271-3788 or [www.agriculture.nh.gov](http://www.agriculture.nh.gov).

Photos:

Top photo: Executive Councilor, Ray Burton and Gail McWilliam Jellie, NH Dept. of Agriculture, Markets & Food with friends in front of donated trees at the Rocks Christmas Tree Farm in Bethlehem.

Bottom photo: Nigel Manley, Manager of the Rocks Christmas Tree Farm and National Chairman of the Trees for Troops program, among donated trees at the Rocks Christmas Tree Farm.

